JOHN TIMOTHY STONE CHAPEL

DEDICATION

SATURDAY, JULY 14, 2007

10:30 A.M.

At the Fourth Presbyterian Church of Chicago which John Timothy Stone served faithfully as Pastor from 1909 to 1930 there is a small chapel named for him: The John Timothy Stone Chapel. It is one of the treasures of Fourth Presbyterian Church; the décor is gothic but simple: dark wood, hard wood floor; a small altar flanked by two angels. A tryptich of the Transformation is above the altar,

Jesus in the center, the disciples kneeling in reverence on either side. A lamp suspended by a long chain from the ceiling was a gift of a couple whose son was killed by a train in Princeton in 1941. Installed as a memorial lamp in 1943, it became a vigil lamp for serving in the armed forces during World War II. Honor Roll books containing a page for each of the 425 members in uniform were kept on the altar, and morning prayers included a daily turning of three pages.

Every morning the staff of Fourth Church begins the day in morning prayer in the John Timothy Stone

Chapel. We pray for the sick and needy, for each of our members, 10 every day, for the peace of the world.

And after worship on Sunday mornings worshippers who want to pray – or to have someone pray with them or for them, are invited to the John Timothy Stone Chapel to meet with a member of the Board of Deacons – who will listen and pray with them. On many Sundays_____ responds to that invitation and maybe for the first time, someone may _____ come to God and prayer – in their grief, their anxiety, their stress and

sometimes their great joy and gratitude. There are small, intimate weddings in the chapel, occasional family memorial services and just last week I was privileged to stand with a couple in the John Timothy Stone Chapel as they renewed their wedding vows on their 25th anniversary.

Of all the ways to be remembered I can't think of a better - more fitting one – to have your name affiliated with a place of prayer, a place where men and women bring themselves intentionally into the presence of

God; bring to God the contents of their hearts.

Now there will be two such places with the name John Timothy Stone remembered.

He was a missionary leader. He challenged people to expect great things of God: attempt great things for God.

He was a superb manager with a keen eye for administration. He presided over the _____ of Fourth Presbyterian Church from a traditional Protestant parish church, to a large, dynamic, active urban institution. Long before theological education

acknowledged that a major part of a minister's responsibility was managing an institution, John Timothy Ston knew it and knew how to do it.

He was a major force in the life of the Presbyterian Church which elected him as its Moderator and turned to him for leadership which it came time to bring the best organizational principles to the national church structure. In many ways – and not many people know this – he was the father of the 20th Century American Protestant denomination. A centralized structure, with Boards and entities

working together – financially and missionally – was his _____ and _____.

He was a strong and eloquent preacher. In Baltimore, before he came to Chicago, members of the Johns Hopkins University faculty eagerly heard him on Sunday mornings. In Chicago he preached to the political, economic and professional leaders of the city.

But at the heart of the man, he was a disciple of Jesus Christ who did everything he could to bring the saving Gospel of Jesus Christ to individual men and women: to encourage men and

women to follow him in their lives and to trust him forever.

How fitting in this place – where people will bring their faith – and their doubts, their joys and sorrows, their hopes and dreams – to lay them at the feet of Jesus – how wonderfully fitting that it will bear the name of his follower, his name – John Timothy Stone.